

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation of the Action Plan Team: Staff Development

#### Statement of Issue #3-35: R-121 (Resubmission) 9/13/00

Summary: R-121 – Review use of full time staff as a means of enhancing instructional quality.

Recommendation: Continue to use a diverse group of qualified staff and contract instructors.

Background: Over the past 20 years, the NFA has used both full-time staff and contract resources to support its classroom instruction. Early on, it became obvious that there were not enough full-time instructional resources to keep up with the expansion of the NFA's delivery program. It was also apparent, that full-time staff quickly became limited in their knowledge in the content area they were teaching, as they were no longer a "practitioner" in their field. Whenever possible the full time staff and contract instructors continue to share instructional responsibilities dependent on staff availability and expertise required. This is a continuing practice within USFA.

The use of contract instructors over the years has provided several benefits. The first is that contract instructors are practitioners in their field of instruction and are able to stay current through the knowledge and skill gained from application. Contract instructors also represent a wide geographic area and are able to bring those geographic differences into the classroom, which is populated with a geographically distributed student body. Contract instructors are able to stay in touch with the changes taking place in the field and are able to bring those changes into the classroom as well as course development and revision efforts. The use of contract instructors offers an economic benefit in that you only pay for the services that you receive.

Conclusion: There is a benefit in using contract instructors at the NFA. Their backgrounds and ongoing involvement in the fire service, allow them to maintain their "practitioner status" which reinforces the NFA's teachings and adds to its credibility. The geographic al diversity of the instructor cadre also provides a cross-cutting approach to the Nation's fire and emergency response issues.

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APPROVE/Date

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DISAPPROVE/Date